

SUPPORT OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 99, CONDEMNING LACK OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, the House Committee on International Relations at this time is marking up a very important resolution condemning the Cuban government, the dictator Castro, for its latest and ongoing Stalinist crackdown against the internal opposition and the independent press.

Among the scores and scores and scores of well-known dissidents and independent press members who have been arrested in recent weeks are the most distinguished members of the internal opposition in Cuba, and the four best known and also very distinguished members of the internal opposition, Felix Bonne Carcasses, Marta Beatriz Roque Cabello, Vladimiro Roca Antunez, and Rene Gomez Manzano. These individuals were tried in a farcical and secret proceeding on March 1, and only a few days ago, this week in fact, Castro announced the sentences: 5 and 4 and 3½ year sentences for those dissidents.

Now, the internal opposition is working intensely and valiantly in Cuba to draw international attention to Castro's deplorable human rights violations and continues to strengthen and grow in its opposition to the dictatorship. At this time of great repression, it is indeed proper and necessary that the international community, as this Congress is doing at this time and will do next week, demonstrates its firm and unwavering support and solidarity with the internal opposition and the independent press.

What is remarkable and unexplainable and condemnable is that while, correctly so, even many of Castro's best commercial allies, such as Canada and the European Union and Latin American states, have rightfully condemned Castro's recent crackdown, and the government of Spain is reevaluating its decision to send the king of Spain there in the next weeks, and the members of the Ibero-American Summit are reevaluating their decision to go to the summit in Havana later on this year, while all that is taking place based on this crackdown by the Cuban dictator, what is the Clinton-Gore administration doing?

The Clinton-Gore administration has reiterated its intent to send the Baltimore Orioles to Cuba. I know that is unbelievable at this stage as well as in ultimate bad taste. I would say it demonstrates a perfidious bad faith. Because while the Clinton-Gore team says that it is a people-to-people exchange, the Baltimore Orioles will be going to Cuba to a stadium filled by Castro's people. Castro will decide who gets to go to the stadium, Castro will be at the stadium, and he will receive the public relations banquets that will be provided to him by virtue of the fact

of this diplomatic gesture of the Clinton-Gore administration.

So I call upon the Clinton-Gore administration to stop its hypocrisy. If the administration is going to condemn the crackdown, condemn the crackdown. They should not say they are going to condemn the crackdown and then say they are sending the Baltimore Orioles, which is what they are doing. So I denounce that as hypocritical, and I denounce that as unconscionable.

At this time, more than ever, the Cuban people deserve and merit and require the unwavering support of the international community, including the government of the United States. I call upon this government to act in a way consistent with its moral and legal obligations to stop its hypocrisy; to cancel this game of Mr. Angelos and the other supercapitalists who want to go and do business with the apartheid economy of Castro, and to say that this is not the time, while the dictatorship is in its last gasps, to be sending little baseball games for the pleasure, entertainment and publicity feast of a moribund dictatorship.

So if there is any dignity left in that White House, I say cancel the Orioles' little game and be consistent with the ethical and constitutional and legal requirements of the moment and stand with a people who have suffered for 40 years and are deserving of the same democracy and self-determination and human rights that has spread throughout the rest of the hemisphere.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to join my distinguished colleague ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN in sponsoring this important and timely resolution along with its other distinguished sponsors from both sides of the aisle.

The Cuban dictatorship's repressive crackdown against the brave internal opposition and the independent press must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. The internal opposition and independent press of Cuba have our profound admiration and firm solidarity.

This resolution by the United States House of Representatives condemns Castro's stalinist crackdown on the brave internal opposition and the independent press, and demands of the Cuban dictatorship, as the entire international community *must*, the release of all political prisoners, the legalization of all political parties, labor unions and the press, and the scheduling of free and fair, internationally supervised elections.

Martin Luther King rightfully declared that an injustice anywhere constitutes an affront to justice everywhere. Now more than ever it is incumbent upon the entire international community, as the U.S. House of Representatives is hereby doing, to demonstrate its firm solidarity with the oppressed people of Cuba and with the brave Cuban internal opposition and the independent press.

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WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, last week the House narrowly passed a watered-down House concurrent resolution originally designed to endorse President Clinton's plan to send U.S. troops to Kosovo. A House concurrent resolution, whether strong or weak, has no effect of law. It is merely a sense of Congress statement.

If last week's meager debate and vote are construed as merely an endorsement, without dissent, of Clinton's policy in Yugoslavia, the procedure will prove a net negative. It will not be seen as a Congressional challenge to unconstitutional presidential war power. If, however, the debate is interpreted as a serious effort to start the process to restore Congressional prerogatives, it may yet be seen as a small step in the right direction. We cannot know with certainty which it will be. That will depend on what Congress does in the future.

Presently, those of us who argued for Congressional responsibility with regards to declaring war and deploying troops cannot be satisfied that the trend of the last 50 years has been reversed. Since World War II, the war power has fallen into the hands of our presidents, with Congress doing little to insist on its own constitutional responsibility. From Korea and Vietnam, to Bosnia and Kosovo, we have permitted our presidents to "wag the Congress," generating a perception that the United States can and should police the world. Instead of authority to move troops and fight wars coming from the people through a vote of their Congressional representatives, we now permit our presidents to cite NATO declarations and U.N. resolutions.

This is even more exasperating knowing that upon joining both NATO and the United Nations it was made explicitly clear that no loss of sovereignty would occur and all legislative bodies of member States would retain their legal authority to give or deny support for any proposed military action.

Today it is erroneously taken for granted that the President has authority to move troops and fight wars without Congressional approval. It would be nice to believe that this vote on Kosovo was a serious step in the direction of Congress once again reasserting its responsibility for committing U.S. troops abroad. But the President has already notified Congress that, regardless of our sense of Congress resolution, he intends to do what he thinks is right, not what is legal and constitutional, only what he decides for himself.

Even with this watered-down endorsement of troop deployment with various conditions listed, the day after the headlines blared "the Congress approves troop deployments to Kosovo."

If Congress is serious about this issue, it must do more. First, Congress cannot in this instance exert its responsibility through a House concurrent resolution. The President can and